

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON



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14th Annual Review
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Operation Opht. - 22/1/4-3

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HISTORY OF OPERATIONS
G-3 SECTION, 14th A.D.
APO 446, USA

December, '44

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The opening of the month found the 14th Armored Division split up under several commands. CCA was under the control of the VI Corps and fighting in the Vosges Mountains. The 68th Armored Infantry battalion was still in the Vicinity of Nice under the 44th Brigade and the 19th Armored Infantry Battalion was enroute from Nice to the division. The 94th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was attached to the 79th Infantry division and operating in the Strasbourg area.

The 19th Armored Infantry Battalion rejoined the division on December 2.

One medium tank company of the 47th Tank Battalion, which was attached to the 45th Division on Dec. 1st, was attached to the 397th of the 100th Infantry Division on December 3rd. The Commanding General of the XVth Corps also ordered a light tank platoon attached but was informed that all light tanks of the 47th were being processed and not available for use.

On the same date CCA after a hard campaign in the Vosges was returned to division control. The main components of the Combat Command had included the 25th and 48th Tank Battalions, the 62nd Armored Infantry Battalion, 500th Armored Field Artillery Battalion and a company from the 125th Armored Engineers and 84th Armored Medical Battalions.

Major Townsend, executive officer of the 68th Armored Infantry Battalion reported to division headquarters the status of his battalion which was enroute from Nice to join its parent organization.

CCA closed in its assembly area, vic. Hochfelden at 0300, Dec. 4.

Control of the 14th passed from the XVth Corps to the VIth on Dec. 5. The division was informed that the 68th's track vehicles would detrain at Einva

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and proceed overland from there. The first train was due to arrive at midnight. The wheeled vehicles were coming overland from Nice and were expected to close in the vicinity of Hochfelden on the 6th and 7th.

On December 6th one rifle company of the 19th, plus one battery of the 500th was alerted to march at 1300 to reinforce the 94th Cav. Squadron, which was attached to the 79th Infantry Division, at Hoerd. Later in the day a second rifle company plus one platoon of B Co., of the 25th Tank Battalion, went on the same mission. The 47th Tank Battalion which had been attached to the 45th Infantry Div. was returned to the 14th's control and assemble at Ringendorf.

The division had the mission to increase vehicular and radio activity to the south of Bischwiller.

The 68th lost a halftrack on Dec. 8. It went through the friendly outpost line and hit an American mine. The 19th AIB, Co. "C" of the 500th AFA and 2B25 Tank Battalion were released from support of the 94th. The 499th and 500th Armored Field Artillery Battalions were reenforcing the fires of the 171st and 160th Battalions. Other elements of the division were engaged in reconnaissance.

On Dec. 9th the 500th AFA moved to positions to reenforce the fires of the 103rd Infantry Division Artillery. No movement of troops were involved but CCB was alerted to protect the left flank of the 79th Infantry Division between Haguenau and the 103rd Infantry Boundary.

The Vth Corps notified the division that the 94th would be returned to division control on the 11th. The division was put on a six hour alert in the morning. The 499th, 500th and 501st AFA Battalions were reenforcing

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the fires of the 103rd.

On the 11th Task Force England was constituted. It consisted of one platoon of medium tanks, platoon of light tanks and C Troop of the 94th. Mission was reconnaissance by force of the Hageunau-Surbourg route. CCB was notified to be ready to move on one hour's notice at daylight the next day.

On the same date the first Division Field Order was given but never executed. In it the mission of the division was to pass through the 103rd Infantry Division on Vth Corps order and attack in multiple columns on axis Surbourg-Lauterbourg, cut off and destroy forces now facing 79th Infantry Division. Then to execute vigorous reconnaissance toward line of Lauter river in zone.

CCA (62nd, 25th, B94th and attachments) was to pass through 103rd Inf. Div. on div. order and attack in zone in not less than two columns.

CCB (19th AIB, 48th Tanks, C-94th Cav.) was to assemble in vic., Biblisheim and on division order to pass through CCA and seize objective; execute strong Rcn. toward line of Lauter river.

CCR (68th AIB, 47th Tanks and attachments) was to displace forward by bounds on Div. order prepared to reenforce either CC. Prepared to meet counter-attack on either flank.

500th AFA Bn., was to be in direct support of CCA, 499th in direct support of CCB and the 501st in general support.

Task Force England continued reconnaissance on Dec. 12th and reached Surbourg. Had to clear road block just north of Hageunau on the Hagenau-Surburg road which consisted of 300 yards of fallen trees with 2 or more "S" mines. It was undefended.

Field Order #2 was given and it marked the first operation of the elements of the 14th Armored Division under division control.

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The 14th was to debouche from the Hageunau Forest at daylight on the 13th and attack in multiple columns in zone, seize Wissembourg area and crossings of Lauter River and destroy enemy in zone.

CCB with 409th AFA Bn. attached was to move from present assembly area at 130200 to a position in order to debouche from woods at daylight and attack on axis Surbourg-Salmbach. CCA was to follow CCB to Surbourg and then attack on Surbourg-Wissembourg axis. CCR was again to be prepared to assist either Combat Command.

On the 13th Task Force England continued to give reconnaissance reports. The 47th Tank Battalion was attached to the 103rd Infantry Division robbing CCR of its armor strength.

CCB debouched from woods and advanced to east of Hatten. CCA followed CCB to Surbourg and then moved north in CC zone to vic., Soultz. The division CP was moved from Hochfelden to Surbourg.

CCA moved again at daylight of the 14th of December and during day seized and occupied Ingolsheim, Hermerswiller, Munsbach, Hoffen and ^{RIEDSELTZ} Riedseltz. Some elements of the Combat Command reached Oberseebach.

CCB after repairing a blown bridge at Hatten advanced in zone and seized and occupied Buhl, Trimbach, Siegen and Oberlauterbach. Some elements of the 19th AIB reached objective-Salmbach.

CCR followed up the advance and moved to vic., Niederbetschdorf.

On the fifteenth CCB completed the occupation of Salmbach. North of Salm-bach advancing infantry and reconnaissance elements made slight gains in the face of heavy SA, artillery and mortar fire.

CCA ran into trouble. As the 62nd AIB was advancing toward Wissembourg it was halted by enemy Artillery, SA and mortar fire coming from the vicinity of Oberdorf.

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CCB moved up to Oberseebach and established patrols west of Schleithal.

The honor of getting the first troops of the division into Germany went to the 19th AIB on December 16. CCB crossed patrols to the north bank of the Lauter River at 0930 near the vicinity of Salmbach and Schleithal.

In the meantime CCA attacked north in two columns from the vicinity of Reidseltz and entered Wissembourg at 1015. The 62nd AIB was the first column through and after being delayed by a blown bridge and underpass proceeded to Seimergen, Rechtenbach and Haftelhof. 25th column followed through Wissemburg and reached the outskirts of Schweighofen at darkness.

On the 17th of December the division CP was moved to vic., Leiterswiller. CCB continued to reconnoiter north of the Lauter River and at 1915 withdrew patrols to a line 500 yards north of river for a bombing mission. Also fired artillery missions at pillboxes of Siegfried line discovered by patrols.

CCA dispatched Task Force Shedd at 0745 from Rechtenbach to reconnoiter Ober Otterbach and Berg-Zabern. The Task Force was stopped by a crater in the road and received enemy mortar fire. The 25th attacked east from Schwieghofen at 0745. The entire Combat Command pulled back to line Schweigen-Schweighofen for bombing mission at 1200.

At 1330 CCA again attacked to north and east in two columns with Task Force Shedd reconnoitering on the east flank of the 62nd AIB.

The 62nd AIB was stopped by artillery fire and outposted Rechtenbach, preparatory to being relieved by the 68th AIB which so far had been with CCB.

The 25th Tank Battalion column took Kapsweiger and outposted for the night. Throughout the night both columns probed to locate the Siegfried Line defenses. Task Force Shedd had taken Hofferfrof at 1550 and also outposted for the night.

CCR started moving 68th AIB from Oberseebach to vicinity, Rechtenbach to effect relief of 62nd.

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After completing relief of the 62nd the 68th advanced to Ober Otterbach on December 18. The battalion encountered heavy artillery, SA and mortar fire which compelled it to withdraw and reorganize. Elements of two platoons were cut off and withdraw under cover of darkness that night.

The 25th fired on the Siegfried defenses at Steinfeld from Kapsweyer.

CCB on the 18th patrolled Bien Wald to west and fired artillery missions to north of CC zone.

Task Force Shedd was relieved and elements of the command returned to their parent units. 68th AIB and 25th Tank battalion, of CCA, received artillery and mortar fire in their zone all day.

During the day the 25th Tanks and 48th changed Combat Commands and the movement was completed by 1815.

CCB throughout the day had maintained its patrol duties.

On the 20th CCA and CCB had settled down to firing and patrolling missions. CCA delivered direct and indirect fire from tanks supported by Artillery and observed enemy activity in the Siegfried Line. Observed fire on what was believed to be an enemy OP resulted on less accurate fire in Kapsweyer.

CCB patrolled north of the Lauter River and SE of Steinfeld. Fired indirect fire missions on enemy activity reported by patrols.

Between the hours of 1630 and 1715 all patrols were withdrawn to Lauter River while coordinated firing was conducted by all guns of the Combat Command, other than those on security outpost, on pillboxes and road blocks previously reported by patrols.

On the 21st and 22nd CCA and CCB worked over their zones in the same manner.

Also on the 22nd CCB assumed the name of Task Force Hudson under the control of Vth Corps and moved to Barrenthal. The Task Force consisted of the 62nd AIB, 94th Cavalry, 117th Cavalry, 500th AFA Battalion, A and B Cos.
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of the 125th Engineers, a TD Company, plus some other artillery.

On the 23rd the 79th Infantry Division began to relieve the 14th Armored and the relief was completed by 1300 of the 24th. CCA opened its CP at Kuiz-
enhausen and all elements of the command had closed in their assembly areas
at 1630. GCB started moving to its assembly areas at 1800 and all elements
were closed by 2300. GCB's CP was at Schwabwiller.

Christmas Day found the division(-) in the vicinity of Surbourg with the
division artillery minus the 500th supporting the fires of the 79th Infantry
Division.

On the 26th and 27th of December there was no change in the status of
the division but on the 28th CCA(48th Tank, 68 AIB, 501st AFA, C-94th, C-125th,
A-84, B-136, Dets. of 154 Signal and MPs) moved to vicinity Phalsbourg and
was attached to the XVth Corps.

On the 30th of December the Division Minus moved to the vicinity of
Bouxwiller starting at 1800. The division closed in the new assembly area
at 0400, December 31.

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HISTORY OF OPERATIONS
G-3 SECTION, 14th A.D.
APO 446, USA

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December 1944

The opening of the month found the 14th Armored Division split up under several commands. CCA was under the control of the VI Corps and fighting in the Vosges Mountains. The 68th Armored Infantry battalion was still in the Vicinity of Nice under the 44th Brigade and the 19th Armored Infantry Battalion was enroute from Nice to the division. The 94th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was attached to the 79th Infantry division and operating in the Strasbourg area.

The 19th Armored Infantry Battalion rejoined the division on December 2.

One medium tank company of the 47th Tank Battalion, which was attached to the 45th Division on Dec. 1st, was attached to the 397th of the 100th Infantry Division on December 3rd. The Commanding General of the XVth Corps also ordered a light tank platoon attached but was informed that all light tanks of the 47th were being processed and not available for use.

On the same date CCA after a hard campaign in the Voges was returned to division control. The main components of the Combat Command had included the 25th and 48th Tank Battalions, the 62nd Armored Infantry Battalion, 500th Armored Field Artillery Battalion and C company from the 125th Armored Engineers and 84th Armored Medical Battalions.

Major Townsend, executive officer of the 68th Armored Infantry Battalion reported to division headquarters the status of his battalion which was enroute from Nice to join its parent organization.

CCA closed in its assembly area, vic. Hochfelden at 0300, Dec. 4.

Control of the 14th passed from the XVth Corps to the VIth on Dec. 5. The division was informed that the 68th's track vehicles would detrain at Einvaux

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On December 6th one rifle company of the 19th, plus one battery of the 500th was alerted to march at 1300 to reenforce the 94th Cav. Squadron, which was attached to the 79th Infantry Division, at Hoerd. Later in the day a second rifle company plus one platoon of B Co., of the 25th Tank Battalion, went on the same mission. The 47th Tank Battalion which had been attached to the 45th Infantry Div. was returned to the 14th's control and assemble at Ringendorf.

The division had the mission to increase vehicular and radio activity to the south of Bischwiller.

The 68th lost a halftrack on Dec. 8. It went through the friendly outpost line and hit an American mine. The 19th AIB, Co. "C" of the 500th AFA and 2B25 Tank Battalion were released from support of the 94th. The 499th and 500th Armored Field Artillery Battalions were reenforcing the fires of the 171st and 160th Battalions. Other elements of the division were engaged in reconnaissance.

On Dec. 9th the 500th AFA moved to positions to reenforce the fires of the 103rd Infantry Division Artillery. No movement of troops were involved but CCB was alerted to protect the left flank of the 79th Infantry Division between Haguenau and the 103rd Infantry Boundary.

The VIth Corps notified the division that the 94th would be returned to division control on the 11th. The division was put on a six hour alert in the morning. The 499th, 500th and 501st AFA Battalions were reenforcing

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CCA (62nd, 25th, B94th and attachments) was to pass through 103rd Inf. Div. on div. order and attack in zone in not less than two columns.

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Task Force England continued reconnaissance on Dec. 12th and reached Surbourg. Had to clear road block just north of Hageunau on the Hagenau-Surbourg road which consisted of 300 yards of fallen trees with 2 or more "S" mines. It was undefended.

Field Order #2 was given and it marked the first operation of the elements of the 14th Armored Division under division control.

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The 14th was to debouche from the Hageunau Forest at daylight on the 13th and attack in multiple columns in zone, seize Wissenbourg area and crossings of Lauter River and destroy enemy in zone.

CCB with 499th AFA Bn. attached was to move from present assembly area at 130200 to a position in order to debouche from woods at daylight and attack on axis Surbourg-Salmbach. CCA was to follow CCB to Surbourg and then attack on Surbourg-Wissenbourg axis, CCB was again to be prepared to assist either Combat Command.

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CCA moved again at daylight of the 14th of December and during day seized and occupied Ingolsheim, Kermerswiller, Munspach, HOFFEN and Reidseltz. Some elements of the Combat Command reached Oberseebach.

CCB after repairing a blown bridge at Hatten advanced in zone and seized and occupied Buhl, Trimbach, Siegen and Oberlauterbach. Some elements of the 19th AIB reached objective-Salmbach.

CCR followed up the advance and moved to vic., Niederbetschdorf.

On the fifteenth CCB completed the occupation of Salmbach. North of Salmbach advancing infantry and reconnaissance elements made slight gains in the face of heavy SA, artillery and mortar fire.

CCA ran into trouble. As the 62nd AIB was advancing toward Wissenberg it was halted by enemy Artillery, SA and mortar fire coming from the vicinity of Oberdorf.

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On the 17th of December the division CP was moved to vic., Leiterswiller. CCB continued to reconnoiter north of the Lauter River and at 1915 withdrew patrols to a line 500 yards north of river for a bombing mission. Also fired artillery missions at pillboxes of Siegfried line discovered by patrols.

CCA dispatched Task Force Shedd at 0745 from Rechtenbach to reconnoiter Ober Otterbach and Berg-Zabern. The Task Force was stopped by a crater in the road and received enemy mortar fire. The 25th attacked east from Schwieghofen at 0745. The entire Combat Command pulled back to line Schweigen-Schweighofen for bombing mission at 1200.

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The 62nd AIB was stopped by artillery fire and outposted Rechtenbach, preparatory to being relieved by the 68th AIB which so far had been with CCB.

The 25th Tank Battalion column took Kapsweiger and outposted for the night. Throughout the night both columns probed to locate the Siegfried Line defenses. Task Force Shedd had taken Hofferfrof at 1550 and also outposted for the night.

CCR started moving 68th AIB from Oberseebach to vicinity, Rechtenbach to effect relief of 62nd.

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During the day the 25th Tanks and 48th changed Combat Commands and the movement was completed by 1815.

CCB throughout the day had maintained its patrol duties.

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Also on the 22nd CCR assumed the name of Task Force Hudelson under the control of Vth Corps and moved to Barrenthal. The Task Force consisted of the 62nd AIB, 94th Cavalry, 117th Cavalry, 500th AFA Battalion, A and B Cos.
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On the 23rd the 79th Infantry Division began to relieve the 14th Armored and the relief was completed by 1300 of the 24th. CCA opened its CP at Kulzenhausen and all elements of the command had closed in their assembly areas at 1630. CCB started moving to its assembly areas at 1800 and all elements were closed by 2300. CCB's CP was at Schmalwiller.

Christmas Day found the division(-) in the vicinity of Surbourg with the division artillery minus the 500th supporting the fires of the 79th Infantry Division.

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On the 30th of December the Division Minus moved to the vicinity of Buxwiller starting at 1800. The division closed in the new assembly area at 0400, December 31.

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